CHAPTER 2

History and Comparison of Bioarchaeological Studies in the African Diaspora[1]

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This chapter surveys the full range of bioarchaeological studies conducted on African diasporic sites in the Americas, thus providing a comparative context for the New York African Burial Ground (NYABG). Skeletal data on people of African descent living under diverse conditions throughout the Americas are described to serve as a basis for comparisons with the burials that are researched in the African Burial Ground Project. (ABGP). These earlier studies used theoretical approaches different from those we employ. This history of diverse, evolving theoretical approaches is examined as a basis for understanding the scientific and societal implications of the research team's particular synthesis of theory (described in Chapter 3).

The review undertaken here is organized as a social history, emphasizing the interaction of diverse traditions of scholarship with the societal forces that have molded bioarchaeological interpretations of the African Diaspora. It is through the application of such an emphasis that our distinctive synthesis of analytical approaches will be clarified and placed in historical context. This chapter also surveys the major research findings of bioarchaeological studies of the diaspora in North and South America and the Caribbean. In addition, by simultaneously examining the societal influences of analytical approaches and the data these approaches have generated, social perspectives and scientific limitations become more apparent. It is also hoped that the advantages of the present

study's perspectives, affording more dynamic interpretations of data and unusual public involvement, will thus be made more obvious.[1]

No condition has influenced the ABGP more than the unique relationship that developed between this project and the African-American public. Subsumed within this relationship is the infusion of 'mainstream' bioarchaeology with the approaches to African diasporic studies that had been developed by diasporans themselves. In order to illustrate differing perspectives and the ultimate synthesis promulgated here, the tradition of diasporan scholarship is summarized and then followed by a social history and survey of bioarchaeological investigations that have run parallel to diasporan scholarship. These disparate ways of explaining black history form the basis of controversy at New York's African Burial Ground (ABG). Our project seeks to resolve those differences with a synthesis of the compatible aspects of diasporan and bioarchaeological theory and method. We begin with definitions of key concepts.

The African Diaspora in the Americas encompasses the populations, societies, cultures, and states created by enslaved Africans and their descendants. As these broadly dispersed legatees of forced migration came to conceive of themselves as recipients of a coherent set of historical experiences and affiliated identities, "Diaspora" took on common meanings; both as lived reality and as a subject of scholarship. The African Diaspora, as currently conceived, is more a concept than either a technical specialization or geographical area of study. According to Harris (1993), the African Diaspora concept subsumes the global dispersion (voluntary and involuntary) of Africans throughout history, the emergence of a cultural identity abroad based on origin and social conditions;

[1] The present chapter follows and extends the article by Michael L. Blakey, "Bioarcheology of the African Diaspora in the Americas: Its Origin and Scope," published in the *Annual Review of Anthropology* (2001, 301:387-422).

and the psychological or physical return to the homeland, Africa. Thus viewed, the African Diaspora assumes the character of a dynamic, continuous and complex phenomenon stretching across time, geography, class, and gender. African Diaspora or Black Studies programs in today's universities emerged as interdisciplinary area studies with the above foci and motivations.

African-American biohistory "has evolved into the study of both the biological and sociocultural factors that have affected and/or influenced the health, fertility, morbidity and mortality of African-Americans in the New World within an historical context. African-American biohistory is a meeting ground for the many disciplines that focus on the health and disease of African slaves and their descendants in the Americas" (Rankin-Hill 1997). Principal among these disciplines are history, archaeology, and biological anthropology. While Rankin-Hill uses the term to encompass both historical and historical archaeological studies, I prefer to consider "biohistory" as research that relies primarily upon written records or anatomical collections, reserving the term, "bioarchaeology" for studies that focus upon excavated archaeological populations. Overall, the traditions of American history, archaeology, and physical anthropology have continued to merge for the development of these specializations.

By the above definitions, African-American bioarchaeology and biohistory might have been subsumed under the broad umbrella of diasporic studies, but for various reasons that has not happened. During the last 20 years, these fields have evolved as distinct research traditions. Juxtaposed and periodically cross-fertilizing, these separate venues also reflect different ethnic and social vantages on the Black experience, emphasizing distinctive ranges of methodology and motivations. Diasporic studies

developed directly from the history of African American and other diasporic scholarship and rarely incorporated the tools of archaeology and biology. Bioarchaeology developed from two anthropological disciplines that, like biohistory, had evolved from Euro-American and other traditions of "white" scholarship that rarely incorporated the social science, humanistic, and activist understandings of diasporic studies. Both traditions, however, developed within a common world of intellectual, social, and political change that connected and divided them.

These segmented trends, fostered by a "racially" segmented American society, have recently been merged in our study of the Eighteenth century African Burial Ground (ABG) in the City of New York. This merger might not have been possible were it not also for the recent emergence of biocultural and publicly-engaged anthropologists whose liberal-left formulation achieved a new compatibility with diasporic intellectual traditions. In contrast, there remains a distinctive forensic tradition that racializes and dehistoricizes the African Diasporic experience. We examine next the history of each of these traditions and the data they generated on the African diasporic past.

Origins of African Diaspora Studies

The first studies of the African Diaspora were initiated by Catholic priests, commissioned by the Spanish Crown, who deviated from their assignment of investigating Native Americans and developed initial reports of the cultures and languages of Africans enslaved in the West Indies. At the end of the legal British trade in human captives from Africa, British studies were also commissioned (Drake 1993, Herskovits 1941) which, taken with the detailed commercial data on enslaved Africans throughout the Americas, serve to anchor our knowledge of the diaspora during slavery.

For example, an important new database has amassed many of the diverse colonial records on the American slave trade at Harvard University.

Yet the accounting of chattel is an incomplete human history. The record of the human experience of Africans in the Americas during slavery is sparse, afforded mainly by the initial writings of people who had been enslaved. These writings beginning 1772-1815 were primarily narratives about slavery (with comments on life in Africa), which focused on the humanity of blacks and the inhumanities foisted upon them by whites in the works of freed and escaped captives, such as Morrant, Gronniosaw, Cugoano, Equiano, and Jea, (Gates and Andrews 1998; also see Harriet Jacobs 1861) often arguing their cases with moral fervor. Later, the narratives of abolitionist Frederick Douglass (1855) reported his life in slavery and damned the institution in a more analytical vein. In 1854, he also attacked Morton's, Agassiz's, Nott's and Gliddon's craniometry and racist Egyptology with sophisticated biocultural analyses, to which we will later return. With the publication of Douglass's "The Claims of the Negro Ethnologically Considered," an African-American genre of critical, vindicationist, and activist scholarship had begun that would form a fundamentally distinctive diasporic scholarship. He raises his environmentalist argument against the contrasting Euro-American racial reductionist scholarship at the origin of American physical anthropology (see also Hrdlicka 1918 on Morton's significance). Meanwhile, Antenor Firmin (1885) of free Haiti authored a scientific rebuttal to French racial reductionism with a holistic analysis (biological and cultural) in support of racial equality. The Parisian academy appears to have completely ignored or disregarded his 600 pages of elegant thought (Fluehr-Lobban 2000), but it remained part of the Haitian cannon for a century.

By 1861, Martin Delany, an African-American motivated by missionary interests and African repatriation, reported on the Niger Valley Exploring Party and the relation of its findings to "the Coloured People of the United States," interests and African repatriation. In the same year, Alexander Crummell, expressed a nascent Pan-African vision of *The Relations and Duties of the Free colored Men in America and Africa*. The American Negro Academy, which he founded in 1897, served as a think tank for African-Americans interested in the uplift of a global black race. W.E.B. Du Bois, a charter member of this Academy, would publish the first empirical urban ethnography in 1899, *The Philadelphia Negro*. Du Bois served for more than seven decades as the dean of African-American social historical research, emphasizing to Pan Africanist, civil rights, and socialist organizing. The Atlanta University Studies, which Du Bois began in 1898, were a comprehensive program of sociological and historical research on blacks, and his editorship of the NAACP's *Crisis* applied social science to the civil rights effort at the beginning of the Twentieth century (see Harrison 1992 and others in this special issue of *Critique of Anthropology* devoted to Du Bois' influence in anthropology). His Jamaican-American contemporary of the early Twentieth century, Marcus Garvey, a student of African and Biblical history and head of the Universal Negro Improvement Association, was far more concerned with building an ideology and organizing diasporic unity and African repatriation.

African-American research was nearly always critical for it began from the observation that white racism had distorted the historical record. Du Bois begins an early study of Africa and its Diaspora stating that the "time has not yet come for a complete history of Negro peoples. Archaeological research in Africa has just begun, and many

sources of information in Arabian, Portuguese, and other tongues are not fully at our command; and too it must frankly be confessed, racial prejudice against darker peoples is still too strong in so-called civilized centers for judicial appraisement of the peoples of Africa" (1915). The problem of an ideologically-distorted Africana past continued to inspire a search for information by diasporic scholars, creating a large body of "vindicationist" literature (Drake 1980, 1993).

During the first part of the Twentieth century, Zora Neal Hurston (Hemenway 1977; Mikell 1999) conveyed the complexity of African-American and Caribbean cultures through literary works based on ethnology and folklore. The Haitian Marxist ethnologist, Jacques Roumain (Fowler 1972) helped found the Negritude movement which paralleled the "Harlem Renaissance" in Francophone Africa and the Caribbean, writing about Haiti in a humanistic vein similar to Hurston's. Another Haitian scholar activist, Jean Price Mars, founded the Society of African Culture and helped found *Presence Africaine*, the scholarly organ of black Francophone intellectuals, located in Paris. It was there in 1955 that Senegalese scholar Cheikh Anta Diop first published portions of what would become the most influential classical archaeological and linguistic analysis of the Africanity of ancient Egypt among African and diasporic readers (Diop 1974). Another African-American anthropologist, Katherine Dunham, through the vehicle of dance, studied and performed the common and deviating threads of African Diasporic culture and religion in Brazil, Haiti, Cuba, and the United States. African-American anatomist and physical anthropologist, W. Montague Cobb focused on issues of evolution, race, racism, and health care in the U.S. in the middle third of the century, also combining his biology with humanism and politics. Fernando Ortiz conducted

ethnographic work and a bioarchaeological study on the African influences of Cuba (1929, 1947). Black anthropologist Irene Diggs, having worked both with Ortiz and Du Bois, covered a broad range of U.S. and Latin American subjects (see Bolles 1999). African American historian William Leo Hansberry had been the first person to receive a degree in African Studies at Harvard before taking a faculty position at Howard, although it was Melville Herskovits who would start the first African studies program at Northwestern University following a two year visiting position at Howard where he studied "race crossing" (Herskovits 1928). In 1916, historian Carter Woodson, also at Howard University, established the *Journal of Negro History*. The organization for which the Journal was the principal organ, the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History (today the Association for the Study of African American Life and History) began "Negro History Week" (today Black History Month) in order to disseminate the history of peoples of African descent. The Fisk and Harvard educated historian, John Hope Franklin's seminal work, *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of Negro Americans* (1947), should also be noted among these pre-1960s contributions to diasporic studies.

This is but a small sample of the contributors of that period, suggestive of the breadth and focus of domestic and international work toward diasporic studies. With the exception of the enigmatic Hurston, all were involved in political activism, and many were involved in the Pan Africanist movement that sought to free the continent of colonialism and to unite its diasporic peoples. Their scholarly efforts were to preserve and report on African cultural persistence and creativity on the continent and in the Americas, to revise what they saw as Eurocentric distortions of the Africana world, and

to foster an understanding of common cultural identity, albeit at times, incorporating an essentialized racial identity not unlike contemporary European romanticists.

White archaeologists and physical anthropologists had initiated no such journals and research organizations by the 1960s, nor did they publish in black journals. But some Euro-American social and cultural anthropologists and historians did use the *Journal of Negro History* and *Phylon* (edited by Du Bois at Atlanta University).

Franz Boas's interest in African cultures provided an important foundation for American scholarship in this area. His empirical and cultural determinist approaches were both welcomed by and in conflict with African-American scholarship, based on how the Boasians did and did not relate to civil rights goals (Baker 1998). Colonial European anthropological research in Africa was quite abundant, but had limited the involvement of American anthropologists until the post-colonial and Cold War era breached the proprietary wall (see Mwaria 1999: 280; an example of this change point is a meeting between Evans Pritchard, Melville Herskovits, and a young Elliot Skinner at Oxford). Boas's student, Melville Herskovits (1930, 1939, 1941), along with Roger Bastide (1967) were among the first non-African Americans to take an interest in a "hemisphere-wide synthesis" of black life in the diaspora. In the Boasian vein, their work focused on the persistence of African culture, acculturation, and miscegenation without devoting serious study to social and economic discrimination (Drake 1993).

Herskovits, like many diasporan scholars, poignantly recognized that the major corpus of existing popular and scholarly literature on African Americans constituted a "myth of the Negro past." In sum, this mythology conspired to present blacks as "a man without a past" who, being without cultural contributions of his own, had been readily

and completely acculturated by Europeans. He intended to expose and correct the myth by undertaking the study of "Africanisms" among Disaporic peoples (1941).

Yet the liberal white tradition of scholarship represented by Boas and Herskovits was also distinguished by a patronizing and instrumental approach to black scholars who were often already advanced in their Diaspora interests. While Boas took the conventional approach of using Hurston to gain access to data from black communities (Willis 1969; Drake 1980), Herskovits apparently discouraged African-American students from pursuing diasporic subjects. Tellingly, some very prominent black scholars who had studied with Herskovits at Northwestern University (Johnnetta Cole and Joseph Harris, personal communication, 1989) sought out other mentors because they had the distinct impression that Herskovits did not view blacks as the equals of whites. He also deterred black students from studying in Africa because it was too similar to their own culture (Mwaria 1999: 280). A counterintuitive rationale from the perspectives of most African Diasporan intellectuals, the anthropological characterization of the etic (outsider's) perspective as objective had served to empower the voices of white anthropologists concerning the non-white world where they worked. The sense that Boas (see Willis 1968; Baker 1998) or his most renowned former student, Mead (see Rankin-Hill and Blakey 1994) were patronizing toward and unaccustomed to the black world, punctuates the history of African-American relations with these relatively anti-racist scholars. Despite these American social constraints, some major Euro-American cultural anthropologists and historians referred to the publications of the African Diasporic intellectuals, and vice versa.

These conflicts of liberal racism might explain partially why intellectual cross-fertilization between Northwestern and Columbia (see Sanday 1999, p. 248 on William Willis's experience at Columbia) tended to proceed through literary interaction, while the collective use of primary data by black and white scholars occurred at the University of Chicago during the same period. It is also important that the sociologists and social anthropologists at Chicago were willing to examine social and economic inequality, unlike the cultural focus of Northwestern. The exposure of the "Myth of the Negro Past," however, was meant to undermine the ideological legitimation of social and economic inequity as its contribution to Myrdal's study, *American Dilemma*, coordinated at Chicago. Rankin-Hill (1997) suggests that Boas's motivations were similar to those of Herskovits.

Arguably, the Boasians and Chicagoans were each emphasizing different aspects of the same problem in segmented and competitive ways. The diasporic scholars were involved to varied degrees in both camps. But the diasporans had a long established interest in culture on their own, which Herskovits's program overlapped. The diasporic scholars, being structured into a single "racial" intellectual community, drew upon each other and all of the scientific, humanistic, artistic, and political aspects of their subject, crossing the lines of disciplinary segmentation and camp competition that were hardening in white academia. The "Harlem Renaissance" from which this work got its energy is well named, not only because it ushered in a cultural rebirth and the "New Negro," but for the pre-Enlightenment sensibility manifested in the breadth of interdisciplinary synthesis openly advocated and developed in the work of individual scholars. Du Bois' seminal work, *Souls of Black Folk* (1903), is an equally influential example, as is the

corpus of Montague Cobb's physical anthropology (Rankin-Hill and Blakey 1994). The "Harlem Renaissance" had taken New York and other major cities by storm in the 1920s, attracting masses of whites to its elevated and seemingly exotic African-American culture. Surely this movement had stimulated the interests of the Columbians, as did the rise of anti-lynching campaigns that were visibly associated with Harlem life. Yet whites did not participate in the prolific writings of this Renaissance, and blacks did not publish in the leading (white) anthropological and historical journals.

By the 1960s, some Euro-American cultural anthropologists were beginning to expand their thinking to include both a diasporic scope and critique of inequality. Norman Whitten (with a degree from North Carolina) and John Szwed (with a degree from Ohio) organized the first anthropological symposium on the diaspora that included white and black contributors. This led, three years later, to the publication of *Afro-American Anthropology: Contemporary Perspectives* (1970). Along with the work of Sidney Mintz (with a degree from Columbia) in the Caribbean (1951, 1974) and Marvin Harris and others who undertook the State of Bahia-Columbia University community Study Project in Brazil (Hutchinson 1957), one began to see studies of the economic aspects of diasporic subordination conducted by Euro-American anthropologists three generations down the Boasian lineage.

From 1930 through 1960, the University of Chicago was frenetically engaged in the social anthropology and the sociology of African Americans. This "Chicago school" emphasized the study of the problems of socioeconomic inequality, mostly in urban settings. Here sociology and social anthropology merged in a way seldom seen in the United States. The participation of African-American graduate students was more

pronounced at Chicago than at Northwestern, and included such luminary graduates as St. Clair Drake (see Bond 1988, Baber 1999), E. Franklin Frazier (1939, see Edwards 1968), Charles Johnson, Mark Hanna Watkins, and Allison Davis (who would join the Department's faculty as "the first African American with a Ph.D. to hold a tenure-track position at a predominantly white university in U.S. history," receiving tenure at Chicago in 1947 (Browne 1999). Drake and Clayton's *Black Metropolis* (1945), about a black Chicago community, is essentially a Du Boisian hybrid of the "Chicago school" and cites mainly the African American authors in urban studies of the previous 50 years. Most of these graduates pointed to the mentorship of W. Lloyd Warner (both at Harvard and Chicago) as the senior faculty member under whom they had worked. The Chicago school was not Boasian, but rather a synthesis of British social anthropology, sociology, and African-American traditions of scholarship. It may have been the most collaborative academic program of white and black scholars in the white world either before or after its moment. From it, Drake would expand upon his scope to include a broad sweep of diasporic space and time, and became a framer of the concept of an African Diaspora. His last treatise, *Black Folk Here and There* (1987 and 1990) was more than a nominal tribute to Du Bois's *Black Folk Then and Now*; it was a synthesis of global data on the social significance of color for African descent groups, beginning in ancient Egypt and ending in the twentieth century.

Throughout the early development of research on the African Diaspora, the members of that diaspora who framed that research approached the subject with both interdisciplinary and activist perspectives, whether missionary, integrationist, Marxist, or Pan Africanist. Drake (1980) describes this African-American intellectual tradition as

"vindicationist," as meant to correct the omissions and distortions of the mainstream Eurocentric tradition. The research of some Euro-American anthropologists in the Boasian lineage was useful in those efforts. The inter-ethnic collaboration at Chicago had policy implications most clearly evident in the governmental use of Myrdal's *American Dilemma* (1945) (funded by the Carnegie Foundation). Yet, black scholars, as they had done since the anti-slavery movement, maintained a front line stance by asserting the need to increase this work against the prevailing denigration of the black experience that was systematically perpetrated by Western education. Frederick Douglass had elucidated an ideological myth of the Negro past nearly 100 years before Herskovits, and African-American efforts to destroy the myth continued to evolve intellectual, organizational, and activist dimensions within the future black world.

Those mentioned above are small and prominent examples of the major sources of in-depth research on people of African descent between the mid-Nineteenth century to 1960. Their research, humanistic expression, and political activism attended the global emergence of the African Diaspora from slavery, colonialism, and segregation. It deliberately contributed to an understanding of people of African descent and their relationsip to the world that would empower those transitions and adjustments. A formal concept of diasporic studies, according to Harris (1993), achieved momentum in 1965 when the International Congress of African Historians convened in Tanzania and included in its program a session entitled, "The African Abroad or the African Diaspora" and continued as a recurring theme of UNESCO publications in several languages. By that time the emergent Pan Africanist Congresses of African, Caribbean, and African American scholars, humanists, and political leadership were influencing the immediate

post-colonial realities of the United Nations. The civil rights, black power, and black consciousness movements of the United States during the period between World War II and the end of the Vietnam War were fueling and fueled by diasporic Black Studies. While many others should be credited, the intellectual leadership of anthropologists St. Clair Drake (Stanford) and Elliot Skinner (Columbia) and historian Joseph Harris (Howard) should be mentioned in the emergence of an academically-grounded concept of the African Diaspora. During the late 1960s and 1970s, scores of black studies programs and departments sprung up at recently desegregated North American colleges and universities as black students physically took over campus buildings for that purpose. Although there are many Euro-American and other scholars working in African-American Studies programs at predominantly white institutions in the United States, those programs nevertheless remain the most likely academic home for black faculty and sociocultural refuge for black students to be found in those majority institutions.

The articulation and disarticulation between these developments and the field of bioarchaeology is a major theme addressed below. This summary of intellectual history provides a reference point against which to contrast the development of an African diasporic bioarchaeology which, while recently impacted by black and cultural scholarship, began along a segmented trajectory of white ecological and racial scholarship that has structured the study of black people very differently. That structuring has taken place in fact, virtually without recognition of the older and deeper intellectual traditions described above. Archaeology and physical anthropology have experienced even less interaction with the black intellectual traditions than did American sociocultural anthropology. Now I turn to the mainstream traditions of physical

anthropology and archaeology whose branches will also penetrate African diasporic research during the 1970s.

Physical Anthropology and the Negro

African American bioarchaeology as it has usually been practiced combines skeletal biology (principally the specialization in paleopathology or the study of health and disease in ancient populations) and historical archaeology (the archaeology of the post-Columbian era in the Americas). Skeletal biology has a longer history of concern with people of African descent in the Americas than has archaeology, and for most of that time physical anthropology followed a different trajectory from diasporan research, mainly because physical anthropology had little if any concern for culture during its first 100 years. Its focus upon racial differences meant that African descent populations, constructed as Negroes, Negroids, or biologically black, were considered an important group for comparisons with Caucasoids, Caucasions, or whites who in turn were regarded as a biological standard of normalcy.

This racist nineteenth and early twentieth century history of physical anthropology has been extensively critiqued (Gould 1996 [1981], Blakey 1996 [1987], Smedley 1993, Armelagos and Goodman 1998, and others). It is now sufficient to state that, apart from specific differences, physical anthropologists classified human populations racially and created hierarchical rankings of races. Whether these were evolutionary or pre-evolutionary rankings, European descent groups (Caucasoids) were placed at the top and Africans (Negroids) at the bottom, with Asians and Native Americans (Mongoloids) usually intermediate. While racial classifications were at times more diverse, from Linnaeus' eighteenth century taxonomy until the issuance of

UNESCO Statement on Race in 1951, this hierarchy was characteristic of Euro-American and European physical anthropology. It was typical of the thinking and policies of the general white population of which these physical anthropologists were part.

The emphasis on race was part of a broader conceptualization of objective science defined by natural historical explanations of variations in presumed natural biological categories (e.g., race). The goal was to develop a science of "man" grounded in the same principles that were applied to zoology, biology, anatomy, and medicine, the fields from which most physical anthropologists initially emerged. The resulting science, however, was clearly not objective. It served as a means of ideological production that naturalized and thus justified colonialism, racial segregation, eugenics, class, and gender inequity. Viewed through this racial lens, human populations had a phylogeny from which culture and history were mere adaptive byproducts. The lower the type, the less interesting were its nearly extinct behaviors. The highest types received romantic eugenical characterizations as was the case for certain sub-races of Western Europe (Ripley 1899, Grant 1916, Stoddard 1921).

African diasporic cultures and history held no interest for physical anthropologists and archaeologists. This was especially true during the nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth centuries in the U.S., which had no African colonies to understand and manage, but instead sustained a system that maintained the subjugation of a black racial caste. "American Negro" was synonymous with former slaves who were thankful for the opportunities that Christianity and acculturation had afforded them to emerge above their assumed absence of prior civilization, as in Douglass' and Herskovits' American myth. There were no contradictions between this myth and physical anthropological study of

the Negro because the naturalized category of race is conceived of as acultural and ahistorical. Physical anthropology was the primary author of the myth.

Skeletal research on African descent populations (as racially black or Negroid) began with Samuel Morton's craniometry in the 1830s, which was popularized in 1854 by *Types of Mankind*, the work of Josia Nott and George Gliddon. Gould (1981) makes the point that Morton's racial ranking was taken as evidence that then enslaved African-Americans had the mentality of children who were better off under white authority. As mentioned earlier, this work initiated an immediate counter argument from the leading African-American activist intellectual of that time, who added that the book's characterizations of Egyptians as Caucasoid were meant to deny the existence (and possibility) of civilized accomplishments among African peoples (Douglass 1954). *Types of Mankind*, which interprets crania, is a nascent bioarchaeological interpretation in a classic racial-deterministic vein. The book was the first to popularize the American field of physical anthropology. Its use of archaeology initiates the sad fact that from the nineteenth century until the present, the Nile Valley has been the only area in Africa on which a body of bioarchaeological literature has developed (Armelagos et al. 1971; Aufderheide and Rodriguez-Martin 1998) perhaps because dynastic Egypt continued to be viewed as Caucasoid with Nubia as its Hamitic ("brown Caucasoid"), slave-bearing neighbor (Bernal 1987). Exceptions to this are the study by Armelagos (1968), which although it had a paleopathology focus reflected a prescient bioarcheological orientation, and the work of Greene (1972); these show African continuity in the Nile Valley. While most of the research has centered in the Nile Valley, there is presently work in southern Africa. (3) (4).

Measurements of the skull meant to show a racial evolutionary basis of social inequality (having evolved from pre-scientific phrenology) continued as the focus of the physical anthropology of the Negro until World War II. Craniometry would continue as the focus for descriptive racial taxonomic studies in colonial Africa (Tobias 1953; Oschinsky 1954; de Villiers 1968), as in American studies of racial admixture (Pollitzer 1958) and in forensic studies for the identification of crime victims and missing persons. The Smithsonian's leading physical anthropologist, Ales Hrdlicka, was assigned the task of reviewing "all of the work on the Negro" in 1927 for the National Research Council Committee on the Negro (Hrdlicka 1927). His bibliography included sociological works of Du Bois and Frazier, and the historical work of Woodson and other African-American writers. In addition, an extensive list of work by white scholars was included that analyzed what was then termed, "the Negro Problem." Hrdlicka (1927:207) viewed the previous work as shoddy, not rigorous, and "tinged with more or less bias for or against the Negro." He proposed that future research should focus on the Negro brain (an organ he studied) which, after all was the "real problem of the American Negro." He then continued work on measurements of the skulls of 26 living African Americans found at Howard University and fudged his data so that "the Full-blood Negro" appeared to be of inferior "mentality" (Hrdlicka 1928; Blakey 1996). In fact, since Morton's time, the study of the Negro had been focused upon recently diseased anatomical collections or on living populations (Davenport and Steggerda's eugenical research in Jamaica in 1929 for example, claiming to show the deleterious effects of miscegenation). (5)

Beginning in 1930, Earnest Hooton (Harvard) would follow Hrdlicka as America's most influential physical anthropologist. Hooton's Pecos Pueblo study (1930),

also initiated what has variously been called the statistical (Armelagos et al. 1971), paleoepidemiological (Buikstra and Cook, 1980) or demographic (Aufderheide and Rodgriguez-Martin 1998: 7) approach to which initiated the development of modern paleopathology, thus starting a research trajectory that continues today. During this time, however, the "Harvard-Washington [Smithsonian] Axis" (Spencer 1979) was at the core of a physical anthropology that was emphatically racially and biologically determinist (Blakey 1996). A substantial body of publications in modern paleopathology would not begin to emerge until the 1970s, and "1930s-type case reports" would persist even then (Lovejoy et al. 1982: 334). Paleopathological data would characterize the core of African American bioarchaeological studies that emerged during the 1980s. Although a biocultural approach to paleopathology would begin then, the racial typological approach has continued.

The persistence of racial taxonomy has been most noted among forensic anthropologists who "in particular find the phenotypic criteria associated with race to have practical applications because they are frequently called on by law enforcement agencies to assist in the identification of human remains" (Jurmain et al. 2003: 396). Furthermore, according to that prominent physical anthropology textbook, such classification "is viewed as no longer valid given the current state of genetic and evolutionary science" while "[o]bjections to racial taxonomies have also been raised because classification schemes are *typological"* and are "inherently misleading because there are also many individuals in any grouping who do not conform to all aspects of a particular type" (Jurmain et al. 2003: 396; also see Armelagos and Goodman 1998). Racial inequality is ostensibly no longer the point of current racial classification, but

when racial attributions substitute for specific cultural affiliations and historical contexts, inequality is implied. When researchers involved in forensics choose to apply the same descriptive approaches to African American bioarchaeological sites (as in MFAT's work on the NYABG or other research discussed later), their interpretations are then loaded with the 150 year legacy of the objectification and generalization of African diasporic identities. African-Americans are consequentially dehistoricized and dehumanized. As will be shown later, the ABGP chose to vary from that legacy and offers a historicized interpretation even of biological data used to track geographical origins and cultural affiliations.

There were also alternatives to the dominant racial deterministic trend in the early years of physical anthropology. Franz Boas, the liberal socialist anthropologist examined living populations and argued for the plasticity of human biology and behavior. His actual focus (and direct target of critique) was the study of European sub-races (Boas 1911, see Blakey 1996). His general critique of racial determinism was used by African-American activist scholars such as Du Bois for their anti-racist efforts (Baker 1998).

Studies of the new documented anatomical collections (macerated cadavers from the dissecting rooms of medical schools) gained momentum during the 1930s. As it happened, the largest series was completed at [Case] Western Reserve University by T. Wingate Todd, a liberal Scottish physical anthropologist, who had been an officer among Colored troops in Canada (Cobb 1939). Todd's analysis of the Hamann-Todd collection's crania showed environmental causes of differences in black and white cranial development. In a presentation which Todd delivered at a meeting of the National

Association for the Advancement of Colored People (1937), he deduced that an equal potential for achievement existed in these "races."

T. Wingate Todd's liberal environmental analyses were furthered by W. Montague Cobb (his former student and an African American physical anthropologist who was professor of anatomy at Howard University from 1932-1969) who used data from skeletal collections and living populations to show that biology did not determine the athletic acumen of blacks or whites (Cobb 1936). Furthermore, Cobb was one of the first physical anthropologists to use demographic data, within a synthesized evolutionary and social historical paradigm, to show high adaptability of the Negro against the adversities of slavery and racial segregation in the U.S. (Cobb 1939; see Figure 2.1).

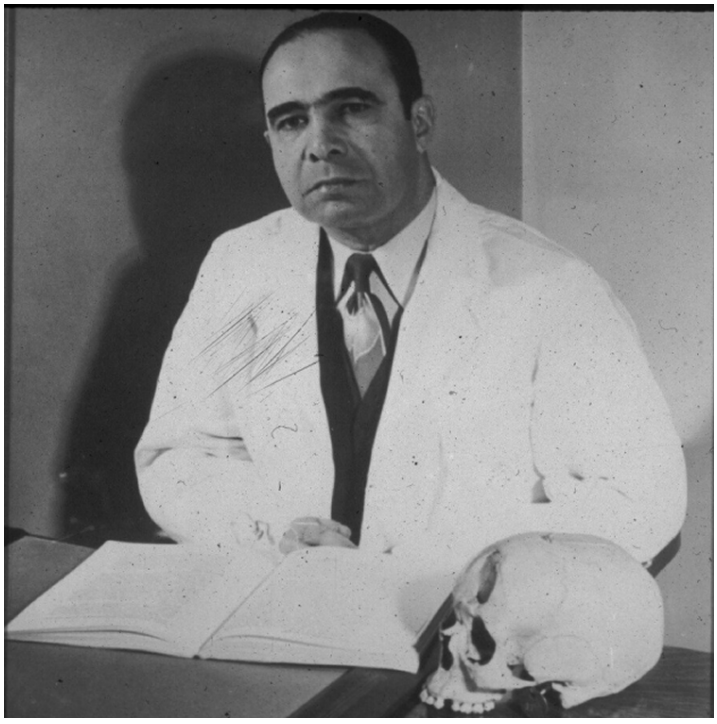

Figure 2.1: W. Montague Cobb with a pathological cranium from his documented anatomical collection at Howard University.

Cobb would later put his approach to physical anthropology and social medicine to service in the U.S. Civil Rights movement and the NAACP in the tradition of activist scholarship (Rankin-Hill and Blakey 1995). These studies, however, seem to have had very little impact on the development of physical anthropology.

Boas was opposed by mainstream physical anthropologists until after World War II when anti-eugenical concerns swept the world and elevated the Boasian approach an advantage (fostering mainly cultural and biocultural anthropology). Todd remained based in anatomy, rather than physical anthropology. Cobb was best known for his medical and civil rights work in the black world, although interest in Cobb's anthropological approaches was rekindled at Howard during the 1990s.

Conception of African Diasporic Archaeology

Physical anthropology slowly began to incorporate modern paleopathology during the 1930s. The field remained steeped in its long tradition of the racial classification of African-descent groups, using this to explain/justify their social status. African-American bioarchaeology would begin during the 1930s. But African-American scholarship was not involved, nor was a keen interest in the Africana world. Instead, it would grow from the interest of many physical anthropologists of that era in race and evolution, particularly as applied to African Diasporic skeletons that were being discovered by archaeologists who were actually looking for extinct pre-Columbian Indians.

In 1938 a team of Oxford archaeologists (funded by Northwestern and Columbia universities) excavated among the first bioarchaeological sites in the African diaspora (Buxton, Trevor, and Julien 1938). In 1939, T. Dale Stewart, who had long been

Hrdlicka's assistant curator at the Smithsonian Institution, responds to the article by Buxton and colleagues and to correspondence by E. M. Shilstone who had made a related find in the British colony of Barbados (Stewart 1939). Stewart's position at the U.S. National Museum made him a likely expert on the racial identification of the curious remains of the one male African-looking skull found in an apparently Arawak (Taino) midden in Barbados and the two "Negro" skulls that were found on Water Island, St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. These were believed to be intrusive to indigenous deposits that had been of interest to the archaeologists. Stewart argued that the Water Island remains were "Negro instead of Negroid" on cranial morphological grounds and concluded that they were therefore intrusive. The Barbados Negro showed a craniometric association with Stewart's Gabon data. While the measurements showed some inconsistencies with African comparative data in both cases, they were "more in the direction of the Negro" (1939: 50). Buxton et al. (1938) comment on a similar situation reported by Duerden for a Jamaican site in 1897, in which the craniometric methods seemed unreliable for explaining the presence of Africans among the remains of the Arawak.

With these studies, the physical anthropology of race assessment in diasporic archaeological populations had begun. Antemortem loss of mandibular incisors in Burial 40.1.2 and wedge-shaped filing of the maxillary incisors in Burial 40.1.1 from St. Thomas were consistent with distinctly African esthetic practices; the unmodified cranial shapes at both sites were unlike the customary practice of shaping the skull in Tainos from Hispañola. From these facts, Stewart concluded that these were not the remains of indigenous people. (Indeed, given the problems of determining population affiliation

with only one or two skulls, the cultural data exhibited the most convincing qualitative distinction) (6).

There was, however, no serious consideration by Stewart or the archaeologists of the possibility of cohabitation of Africans and Tainos. The St. Thomas individuals (an adult male and female) were buried in association with red ochre mounds, stone artifacts, and with a pot over the face of one of the individuals. They were amongst 19 Taino burials. The site had been disturbed by previous archaeological excavation and was difficult to assess, yet there might have been historical reasons for two Africans to have been among a group of Tainos. It is not at all clear from these publications why the site is assumed to be pre-Columbian (the authors actually refer to pre-1700) simply because there were Taino artifacts because Tainos were actually present in the Caribbean in early colonial and genocidal times. The remains were curated at the University Museum at Oxford, but the temporal relationships might never be resolved. There would not be another such study until 30 years later and under similarly accidental circumstances.

A notable comparison is found in the work by Ortiz (1927) followed by Rivero de la Calle (1973) on several cases of dental modification ("*mutilacion*") in Cuban skeletal remains. Although the general assessment of the skeleton is limited, the historical, ethnographic, and folkloric context is extensively revealed with the analysis of the significance of this practice. The practice was associated with Maroons (cimarrones) and religious enclaves. These are also the only examples of dental modification that have been evaluated as a possible local practice, rather than having occurred among Africans brought to the Americas subsequent to the modification of their teeth.

In 1974 two skeletons were found at site 2-AVI-1-ENS-1 at Hull Bay, St. Thomas, which Smithsonian physical and forensic anthropologists also assessed to be "Negroid" (Ubelaker and Angel 1976). Skeleton A (a 33-41 year old man with 5'7" stature) had only slight tibia periostitis (indicating infection) but showed extensive dental decay and abscesses. Skeleton B (a 30-38 year old man with 5'8" stature and a morphology remarkably similar to skeleton A) was shown to have extensive spindle-shaped periostotic tumor-like lesions of the upper right leg and left middle arm, accompanied by active clocae associated with blood-born infection. He had a partially healed fracture of the left humerus (upper arm) near the lesion and a healed fracture of the left clavicle, both of which caused significant shortening of these elements. Skeleton B also had very extensive tooth loss and abscesses. Skeleton B was associated with coffin nails and therefore reasonably of the colonial period. But, Skeleton A was definitely associated with an indigenous pottery fragment (Elenoid period, dated 800-1200) and no colonial artifacts. Radiocarbon dating only resolved that the skeletons were not recent, important for the forensic concerns of the investigation. In this example of another accidental bioarchaeological encounter with an African skeleton, the race, age, sex, and stature methodology continues to be important for forensic identification, yet the assessment of pathology marks a more modern approach than the earlier St. Thomas study. None of these examinations attempts to explore the population, history, or social condition of Afro-Caribbean people.

Another Smithsonian publication by Angel in 1976 examined "Colonial to Modern Skeletal Change in the U.S.A." The study compared 82 archeological skeletons (1675-1879) with 182 modern forensic and donated skeletons. Angel anticipated

increased body size in both European American and African American populations due to increased genetic heterosis and "improvements in disease-control, diet, and living conditions" (p. 727). This is a traditional study in its reliance upon physical anthropological and anatomical literature, early military data on stature, and evolutionary interpretations. The study showed remarkably little skeletal change, albeit greater in the black population than in whites. Life expectancy does increase as does a pelvic indicator of nutritional adequacy, while poorer dental health and the increased frequency of traumatic fractures were seen to reflect modern stresses.

Angel's study was flawed by the nature of skeletal collections. The continuing dearth of middle and high status Euro-American skeletal collections meant that comparisons of the physical differences relating to socioeconomic variation and change among Euro-Americans could not be adequately made (p. 7). Class analyses, especially for the European American population of the past, also cannot be made on the basis of existing skeletal collections because these have practically no class variation. Comparisons with historical African-American or Native-American populations with Euro-Americans also cannot be accurately made unless these are strictly meant to show relationships among the Euro-Americans who were desperately economically poor and/or institutionalized. The fact that physical anthropologists had focused upon the analytical category of "race" meant that the socioeconomic character of these populations was seldom viewed as important, since a Caucasoid was a Caucasoid, whatever his or her class. The political economy of collections acquisition is also evident, given that the poor and the "other" could readily be dug up or dissected, preserving the burial rights of financially stable whites. An increased interest in the biological effects of

socioeconomic environment during the 1970s is certainly apparent in the Angel paper, despite his continuing reliance upon the use of evolutionary principles. With Angel, the Smithsonian had taken a significant step forward from an earlier preoccupation with the racial evolution of "Old American" whites during United States history (Hrdlicka 1925).

In 1977 the skeletons of two enslaved African American men (Burial #3 was 30-40 years of age and Burial #5 was 40-45 years of age) were reported from a 3000 year old burial mound on St. Catherine's Island of the Sea Islands off the Georgia coast (circa 1800). These skeletons, too, were found accidentally during a long term study of the island's native archaeology by the American Museum of Natural History. The analysis (Thomas et al. 1977) was, however, less forensic and more pertinent to historical interpretation than were the Smithsonian studies. Racial identification was made, as in the other studies, along with a modern paleopathological assessment. One man (Burial #3) had a recently fractured leg that had become infected and which probably led to his death. The other "was probably shot to death by a military-type weapon" (1977: 417). Both men had evidence of arduous labor by virtue of their robusticity and muscle development and had "abysmal" dental health. David Hurst Thomas and his associates also encountered the fancy burial of the slave holder's son in a separate location, showing him to be physically young, gracile, and lacking in evidence of hard work. His evidence of childhood illness and poor dental health was similar to the African-American skeletons. These comparisons were used to examine the relative quality of life and condition of the two plantation groups, bringing to bear both written and oral historical sources. The researchers could not determine why the burials had been made in a Native

American burial mound, and they left open the question of relations with native people after considering the generalization of an historian:

> If the [African American] emphasis on burial with one's family spirits was as strong in the early nineteenth century as Combes suggests it was later, the fact that burials were placed in Cunningham Mound D - isolated as they seem to be - becomes a relevant factor for interpretation (1977: 418).

With such a small number of burials (N=3), there was no statistical analysis and there was only a rudimentary historical and cultural analysis. But this study does engage historical analysis and is therefore more advanced than previous reports on accidentally encountered African American sites by suggesting new motivations in addition to its use of the new paleopathology. These authors were examining people, not a race, and probing the conditions of slavery. They re-interred the remains, rather than curating them, and made recommendations about historic burial sites that were considerate of both public sensibilities and scientific concerns for improved rigor and cultural interpretation:

> We do not of course, advocate wholesale archaeological investigation of historic graveyards. Prevalent social and religious customs are to be respected in matters of this sort. But we do urge that as graveyards are required to be moved to make way for progress, archaeological mitigation should include adequate research designs to raise some of the germane questions regarding past human behavior and belief systems (1977: 418).

These are the only African Diasporic bioarchaeological studies prior to 1980. After this time, sample sizes and geographical ranges would increase, historical and cultural interpretations would become more sophisticated, and "customs...respected in matters of this sort" will overwhelm bioarchaeology. What would be responsible for these dramatic changes?

The emergence of an active research interest in African-American sites developed as a result of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. This Act required the funding of archaeological work to mitigate the effects of all Federal construction projects, including buildings and highways, in order to preserve cultural heritage. These Cultural Resources Management (CRM) projects caused the growth of private archaeological consulting firms, which quickly became the main source of archaeological employment in the United States. CRM also meant that contract funding was available for site excavation and descriptive reporting for sites that were encountered accidentally. Federal road and building projects across the United States produced a number of sites, some of which resulted from encounters with African-American cemeteries. While acknowledging that mitigation is a form of cultural resources preservation, that ideally sites are protected, projects halted or impacts mitigated, it also is the case that, potentially here was a target of opportunism for unethical contract archeologists, but also of opportunity for the launching of African-American archeology.

The first work at an African-American site, however, was not on a cemetery, but rather on a plantation site, the Kingsley Plantation in Florida was excavated by Douglass Fairbanks in 1967. Departing from the new archaeology's emphasis upon ecological determinants, Fairbanks took an historical approach. According to Ferguson (1992), "Fairbanks was not bowing to professional pressure or pleas for a new and more objective archaeology; he was addressing black demands for more attentiveness to black history, and without that political pressure African-American archaeology would have developed much more slowly, if at all" (p. xxxviii). I agree with Ferguson that this new specialty resulted from a combination of the structure of the law, together with the

pressure of black political and social protest." African-American archaeology increased funded because such sites were repeatedly found in the way of U.S. Government roads, buildings, levies, parks and other construction projects.

Black protest had created both an interest in and market for black history for which archaeologists (and bioarchaeologists) showed little or no interest during the final decade of the 20th century. Archaeologists did not take courses in African-American Studies departments that were multiplying during the period between the 1970s-90s, a time when an archaeological shift took place. These departments remained marginal to the university education of whites. Nor did most archaeologists excavating black sites collaborate with African Americanists, most of whom were black, who had the most extensive knowledge of African Diasporic history and culture. Furthermore, archaeologists did not participate in the Association for African American Life and History or any other scholarly associations African-Americans had long ago established for purposes similar to these that archaeology was just beginning to serve.

This lack of regard for the intellectual fundamentals of African-American Studies reflects the continued segmented social relations (legal and defacto segregation) between U.S. whites and blacks, respectively, comprising the archaeologists and African Americanists. For two more decades, this situation would continue to produce important limiting effects on African-American archaeology and African-American Studies. Notably, plantation archaeologist Theresa Singleton (Smithsonian and Syracuse University) and African-American Studies specialist Ronald Bailey (Northeastern University) organized a week-long meeting at the University of Mississippi in 1989, which had as its goal to bring practitioners of both fields together in dialogue. It is not

sociologically surprising that as the only black Ph.D. archaeologist working on plantation sites, Singleton would be the one to notice that something was wrong and to try to bring African American Studies and archaeology together to talk (8).

In the most extensive review of "The Archaeology of the African Diaspora in the Americas," Singleton and Bograd (1995) found that African-American archaeology had expanded since the 1960s to include greater regional and industrial diversity of southern sites, to address issues of race and ethnicity, acculturation, inequities, and resistance. Moreover, their exhaustive survey also revealed that most of the literature is largely descriptive, relies too heavily upon flawed analytical techniques or very narrow perceptions of ethnicity, and has been slow to incorporate African-American perspectives in developing this research (p. 30). Continuing, these authors observe, "[t]hat race predominates in discussions of plantation life or defines the presentation of blacks' lives following emancipation may in part reflect white archaeologists' and white America's preoccupation with race. There is a tendency to presume that race, or ethnicity, is significant, which is not to say that race is not important. Rather it is to assert that white preoccupations are not always the same as black preoccupations" (p. 31). The authors argue that it is best to consider ethnicity as a process that is both forced upon and creatively utilized by African Americans, rather than creating an archaeology of "the other," consisting of static typologies that identify a group with objects. In most cases, the absence of type objects comes to constitute evidence of acculturation and assimilation when other plausible interpretations exist. I suspect that this typological approach is tethered to both the American myth of the Negro past and Herskovits' search for Africanisms. According to Singleton and Bograd (1995), "The tenor of many ethnicity

studies is problematic. One problem is that they tend to take a perspective from the outside, how archaeologists and others define ethnics or cultural groups, rather than how ethnics define themselves" (pp. 23-24). Similar issues have been raised in a critique of African archaeology (Andah 1995).

Historical archaeologists' publications rarely reflect African Diasporic scholarship, which has been the most prolific literature on this subject for more than a century. What is most often evident in their work, however, is the influence of the new historiography of plantation life that had also been fostered by the social changes of the 1960s. After, 1980, physical anthropologists would also draw from this important literature, central to the maturation of African-American bioarchaeology. Although space will not allow extensive discussion of the emergence of African-American research in mainstream historiography, a few examples seem essential to understanding its emergence and influence upon bioarchaeology.

The same sociological phenomena that spurred African-American archaeology fostered historical research on the subject, but the marketing and funding venues for history were different from those of contract archaeology. The Black Consciousness Movement had succeeded in producing a market for history books and lectures while the Civil Rights Movement had stimulated interest in both blacks and American racism. The historical works of van Woodward (1968), Jordan (1968), and Genovese (1976) followed the early work of the left-leaning Aptheker (1943) and are examples of an emerging Euro-American interest in African-American historiography that explained the origins of American racism and the condition of blacks. Herbert Gutman's historical and demographic study of *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom* (1976) opposed Senator

Daniel Moynihan's influential report, *The Negro Family in America: The Case for National Action* (1965). Moynihan had attributed urban black poverty to a typically "dysfunctional" slave family, which Gutman showed to have little historical basis. But it was Fogel's and Engerman's economics treatise, *Time on the Cross* (1974), that stirred a major debate about whether or not working class whites were similarly oppressed as enslaved blacks whom the authors claimed were more than adequately nourished. Like Moynihan, *Time on the Cross* raised the specter of apology when blacks were found to have been worse off in many respects after the Reconstruction than during slavery. The critiques of this work by Gutman (1975) and David et al. (1976) were quite devastating. This new historiography drew heavily upon the prior work of black scholars. Add to these Phillip Curtin's *Atlantic Slave Trade: A Census* (1969), which estimated the death toll of the middle passage in the millions -- millions more perhaps than most whites wanted to acknowledge and millions fewer than estimated by some black scholars – and became a major historical grist for the mill of scholarly and politicized debate.

Physical anthropologists began to use data about the demography, nutrition, and health of enslaved African Americans to address questions regarding the quality of life among the enslaved. Curtin's article on the slave trade and Steckel's (1977, 1986) work on problems of nutrition, disease, and mortality on plantations followed Stampp's *The Peculiar Institution* (1956) in showing the dire demographic and health consequences of American slavery. Higman's extensive Trinidadian data on the demography of the slave trade represents an early example of how this type research uniquely found its way to the *American Journal of Physical Anthropology* (1979). Kiple and Kiple's (1977) and Savitt's (1978) apologetic theories attributing chattel slavery and racism to black genetic

immunities to disease also resonated with the evolutionary bent of physical anthropology. The biological data generated by these biohistorical debates interested physical anthropologists who were poised to enter the discussion with the bones and teeth of the enslaved people themselves. Nonetheless, these historians, Rankin-Hill (1997:12) seems correct in saying that "little has been accomplished in expanding the conceptual limits of [biohistory]. In fact, much of the emphasis has been on the intricacies of quantification and data manipulation, and not on different approaches to interpreting and/or examining the data generated."

The stage for the nascent bioarchaeology of the 1980s was set. Political events spurred a broader societal interest in blacks. Government funding options and markets opened for research and publications in African-American archaeology, in particular, and historical archaeology, in general. Accompanying these trends, a biohistorical literature came to prominence that spoke to the biological anthropologists who had seized upon epidemiological and demographic approaches.

As interest in racial studies, apart from forensic anthropology waned, physical anthropologists were looking for new ways to apply their methods to societal issues (Blakey 1987; Armelagos and Goodman 1998). Biocultural approaches which sought to use biological stress indicators as evidence of societal variation and change began to emerge during the 1970s (Goodman and Leatherman, 1998). Biohistorical approaches, if applied to bioarchaeological contexts, were ideal for biocultural studies. The students of George Armelagos and others at the University of Massachusetts in the forefront of biocultural anthropology will later be shown to have had particular impact on the evolving shape of African American bioarchaeology. Finally, the hurricane-like sweep

of successful efforts by Native-Americans in the 1980s to control the disposition of their skeletal remains and sacred objects (Thomas 2000) culminated in the passage of Federal preservation legislation (Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, NAGPRA, 1990). By 1985, objections were focused upon the Smithsonian by the Native American Rights Fund and the U.S. Congress. The writing was on the wall. American physical anthropologists were losing access to their main source of professional reproduction—Native-American bioarchaeological research. The field of African-American bioarchaeology loomed, therefore, to some as an open niche.

The Birth of African American Bioarchaeology

The first extensive African-American bioarchaeological study was conducted by Jerome Rose and his colleagues at the University of Arkansas in 1982. The Cedar Grove cemetery site (3LA97) in Lafayette, Arkansas, was in the path of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers construction of a revetment on the Red River. This African-American cemetery had been used during the Post Reconstruction period, 1890-1927, when freed blacks in Arkansas were engaged mainly in tenant farming. Yet, it was the prehistoric site that lay beneath Cedar Grove that had initially been found significant, and for which "mitigation" of the adverse impact of revetment construction was necessary, according to the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation that oversees the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966. Although the Advisory Council would later accept the African-American cemetery on the National Register as significant and deserving mitigation, little time and few resources were available for the study of the effects of the revetment construction on the sites. The Cedar Grove Baptist Church gave the anthropologists permission to conduct research during a 24 hour period prior to relocation

and reburial. The University of Arkansas team excavated and analyzed the 79 remains extremely rapidly, salvaging an extraordinarily sophisticated set of paleopathological data, given the limited amount of available time. The analysis (Rose 1985) also utilized the biohistorical literature and thus entered into the ongoing debates.

The Cedar Grove burial sample was shown to have been highly stressed by all indications. Neonatal mortality (always underestimated using skeletons due to the deterioration and loss of small bones) was 20 percent, and 55 percent of all individuals died before reaching 15 years of age. Only a single individual, 15-19.9 years of age, died, while most of the remaining members of the sample died between the ages of 30 and 50. Ninety percent of the remains had evidence of infectious disease and nutritional problems, which is very high. Among infants and children there were high frequencies of anemia, rickets, scurvy, and protein malnutrition. For adults, the evidence was mostly of healed or chronic infection, degenerative arthritis, healed fractures in men, and one male and one female with bullet wounds. Evidence of poor nutrition, high disease loads, and arduous work regimens was further supported by the bone histological study of Martin et al. (1987). Rose (1985:*v*) surmised that the work regime for these freed men and women "had not changed since slavery" and that the "general quality of life for southwest Arkansas Blacks had deteriorated significantly since emancipation due to the fall in cotton prices and legalized discrimination."

In 1985, there was sufficient African-American research among physical anthropologists for Rose and Ted Rathbun (University of South Carolina) to organize the first symposium on "Afro-American Biohistory" at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Physical Anthropologists. Reference at these meetings to blacks in ethnic

and historical, rather than racial, terms alone was novel. The symposium was published as a special issue of the journal in 1987 (volume 74), with one paper appearing later (Blakey 1998). Rose co-authored the histological study of Cedar Grove with Debora Martin and Ann Magennis. Also, there were bioarchaeological studies of a South Carolina plantation near Charleston showing evidence of childhood malnutrition and disease in a sample of 27 individuals who died circa 1840-1870 (Rathbun 1987). Dental and skeletal growth disruption was found to be highest for male children, 80 percent of whom had evidence of anemia and infection. Most men and women (69 percent and 60 percent, respectively) presented bone reactions to infection, with relatively high exposure to lead and strontium concentrations indicative of a diet high in plant foods. No clear evidence of syphilis was found (Rathbun 1987). This study contains a useful review of the biohistorical and archaeological literature, again showing the close connection to debates in history and archaeology at that time. Also, this site was being removed due to the development of private land for which the law did not require mitigation. The research team was able to convince the landowner to allow research prior to reburial.

The demography and pathology of 16 individuals from the eighteenth and early nineteenth century St. Peter Street Cemetery in New Orleans give evidence of arduous labor among younger males, and comparatively less such evidence among the many females and older adults interpreted as house servants (Owsley et al. 1987). The further racial analysis of this study that attributes lower life spans to racial admixture, along with the dearth of social and historical analysis, shows continuity with older racial traditions. This paper also describes a deeply infected distal right tibia, which Blakey and Ortner

had diagnosed as osteomyelitis, the result of chronic infection of an ankle shackle (see plate, p. 191, for this extraordinary example).

Another study (Owsley et al. 1990) compares the 149 black and white skeletons from Cypress Grove Cemetery (1849-1929) of Charity Hospital of New Orleans with burials at other sites. Excavation at this site also had been mitigated in the course of a Federal highway project. Similarities were found with the St. Peter's sample; also, the infection rates paralleled those of a New York State pauper's cemetery used by whites. The cut bone findings indicated that both blacks and whites who died at Charity were often dissected prior to burial. Consistent with the forensic approach frequently used in CRM bioarchaeology, the descriptive data were not integrated with community history. The accompanying volume prepared by archaeologists provides historical description (Beavers et al. 1993) dealing mainly with the city health and medical context of the hospital.

Several biohistorical studies appeared during the final decades of the 20th century that also show clear anthropological influences. Hutchinson (1987), using Harris County, Texas, slave schedules of 1850 and 1860 in combination with a credible range of biohistorical literature, explains marked regional population growth as a function of importation, rather than natural increase. She shows that enslaved persons who were recorded as "black" tended to have higher life expectancies on small farms, while those termed "mulattoes" were on average older on large plantations; this possibly was due to more mulatto house servitude on large plantations where black field hands were exposed to the worst conditions. Alternatively, mulattoes might have more often been native to the Harris County plantations and therefore younger, on average, than the blacks who

most likely included imported Africans; also, immunities to yellow fever (following Kiple and King, 1981) might have contributed to differences in life expectancy between the blacks and mulattoes (Hutchinson 1987).

Also, Wienker (1987) combines traditional evolutionary and biodeterministic tendencies with a new bioculturalism in his study of an early twentieth century logging company town in Arizona. While acknowledging health care inadequacies for blacks in the town's deeply segregated context, Wienker considers the possibility that dark pigmentation might have had deleterious effects in the temperate Arizona highlands.

A clearer break toward a non-biodeterministic view, as seen in Rose (1985), Martin et al. (1987) and Rathbun (1987), is also found in the symposium paper by Blakey (1988). This paper traces ethnogenesis and demographic change in an Afro-Native American ethnic group (Nanticoke-Moors) in rural Delaware from the colonial period until 1950. The study uses a political economic analysis of 406 cemetery headstones, archival data, and oral history. It proposes that community responses to racial policies and industrialization brought about a single community's segmentation into different socially-constructed races. Although genetically similar, Nanticoke-Moors experienced different educational and economic options depending on their "racial" affiliations. Increased isolation was required to maintain Indian identity, with increasingly higher life expectancy among the industrializing African-American identified kin, than among Indian identified kin, who maintained a farming economy. Notably, this study considered few biohistorical debates, with the exception of Eblen (1979), and focused instead upon historical and ethnographic literature that examined African-American/Native American relations in the region.

During the mid-1980s, a collaboration was initiated between the Smithsonian Institution and John Milner Associates (a CRM firm), that led to excavation of the First African Baptist Church (FABC) cemetery in downtown Philadelphia and, as a consequence, also contributed to the Afro-American Biohistory symposium. The FABC had been used primarily by free, freed, and escaped African-Americans between 1823 and 1841. Because it was in the path of subway expansion, the site required archaeological mitigation. John Milner Associates excavated 140 skeletons, by far the largest African-American archaeological sample to that date. The FABC was also unique as a northern black bioarchaeological site, and a rare urban example, with St. Peter in New Orleans the other urban exception. The fact that the analysis was led by J. Lawrence Angel, a preeminent physical anthropologist at the Smithsonian Institution, raised the status of African-American bioarchaeology as surely as had the Rose-Rathbun symposium. Angel who had first established his reputation on the social biology of ancient Greece, had turned to the study of secular change in the European and African American skeletons from the colonial period to the present (Angel 1976). Along with his assistant, Jennifer Kelley, the principal archaeologist, Michael Parrington, and the on-site collaboration of Lesley Rankin-Hill and Michael Blakey (who coordinated and completed the project following Angel's death), J. Lawrence Angel personally conducted the core research and also made the collection available to other researchers. This combination of researchers, we believe, may have helped the FABC work evolve even further beyond the descriptive approaches that Angel typically had employed.

Of the 75 adult skeletons, males had a higher average age of death (44.8 years) relative to females (38.9 years), which compares favorably with most other nineteenth

century African-American sites. The burial sample appeared to have been stressed by inadequate nutrition, arduous labor, pregnancy and childbearing, unsanitary conditions, limited exposure to the sun, and extensive exposure to infectious diseases. Nutritional and growth indicators showed little better conditions than for enslaved blacks of the Catoctin Iron works of Maryland, 1790-1820 (Kelley and Angel 1983), although arthritis and violence-related fractures were fewer in Philadelphia (Angel et al. 1987). Consistent with the tradition of physical anthropology, the studies of ancestry were also of interest, with the resultant observation that 30 percent of individuals with os acromiale (non-union of part of the shoulder joint) being interpreted as a familial trait, when it might have been evaluated as the result of persistent mechanical, labor-induced stress during adolescent development (Rankin-Hill 1997: 152; Stirland, 2000:118-130).

The comparative analysis of Angel and Kelly was further developed in a second symposium paper (Kelley and Angel 1987) for which they had assembled 120 colonial African and African-American skeletons from 25 sites in Maryland (Catoctin), Virginia, and the Carolinas, as well as forensic cases of the Smithsonian's collections. Nutritional stresses were very evident in many skeletons, including anemia, which these authors incorrectly attribute to sicklemia. Adolescents and many adults (male and female) showed exaggerated development of skeletal features associated with lifting muscles, including the deltoid and pectoral crests of the humeri. They also noted degeneration of the vertebral column and the bones of the shoulder at relatively young ages. Evidence of skull trauma and "parry" fractures of the lower arm suggested that violence had been especially common at Catoctin Furnace. In these examples, historical references are rarely used.

The First African Baptist Church skeletons were reburied in Eden Cemetery, Philadelphia, by the modern congregation in 1987. At a time when Native Americans were calling for reburial of 18,000 remains at the Smithsonian, the Institution's initial interest in announcing the FABC ceremony was administratively quashed. And, little more than marginal interest was expressed by the church congregation. The attitudes of African-Americans regarding this research, little of which had been made available to them, were mixed. In contrast, five years later, the New York community would explode over a similar project.

John Milner Associates continued to develop the preliminary work of Parrington and the foundation study of Angel (Parrington and Roberts 1984, 1990). Blakey and his associates at Howard's Cobb Laboratory published articles on childhood malnutrition and disease using a detailed analysis of dental developmental disruption, enamel hypoplasia (Blakey et al. 1992, 1994, 1997). Dental defect frequencies in the FABC sample were at frequencies similar to those found in the Maryland and Virginia collections that Angel had described, pointing to a similar degree of childhood malnutrition and disease in the recently free north as in the plantation south (Blakey et al., 1994). Both reported hypoplasia frequencies between 70 and 100, percent which were among the highest in any human population studied by anthropologists (10), thus demonstrating the capability of paleopathology to render this type of comparison across a broad span of human experience. In Philadelphia, these stresses occurred during fetal development as well as throughout the first seven years of life. The advantage of historical records for some FABC individuals included documented causes of death. These causes prominently

included infectious diseases, while 10 percent of Philadelphia's children had reportedly died of marasmus (starvation) (Blakey et al. 1994).

Lesley Rankin-Hill published the first book that synthesized a breadth of African American bioarchaeological and biohistorical data for the interpretation of the FABC, *A Biohistory of 19th-Century Afro-Americans: The Burial Remains of a Philadelphia Cemetery* (1997). Based upon her 1990 Ph.D. dissertation, this extensive treatment of modern paleopathological and demographic methods and the use of general and site-specific historical sources is commendable. Particularly important is her use of a basic model of biocultural stress developed at the University of Massachusetts by Goodman et al. (1984). This general model, which places culture in the role both of stress adaptation and stress inducer, is elaborated by Rankin-Hill as an organizing scheme for the particular historical stressors and effects of nineteenth century urban African-American life (1997, pp. 164-165). She did, in fact, present the most developed theoretical formulation for African American bioarchaeology, which includes the political and economic factors interacting with the physiology and health of early African Americans. She describes the multiple stressors, cultural buffers, and skeletal effects of physiological stress in the lives of Philadelphia laborers and domestic workers whom we will subsequently compare to the earlier skeletal record of New York City. The emphasis on adaptation anchors this work to the evolutionary tradition of the field.

While there are other influential centers, the influence of the University of Massachusetts is tangible, having been the graduate institution of Rose, Martin, Magennis, Rankin-Hill, and Blakey, as well as Robert Paynter in African-American archaeology. It can be distinguished from the other centers of the development of this

specialty by its unabashed advocacy and development of biocultural theory (Goodman and Leatherman 1998: Rankin-Hill 1997). Early biocultural models were developed from the synthesis of the human adaptability interests of R. Brooke Thomas, the biocultural paleopathology of George Armelagos, and the historical demography of Alan Swedlund during the late 1970s and early 1980s at Massachusetts. These models were honed and evolved by their students in order to incorporate political and economic factors that would expose the biological effects of oppression. The influence of faculty in cultural anthropology economics and African-American studies influenced the physical anthropologists and archaeologists, all of whom were exchanging information at a time when walls were being erected between subdisciplines at many other anthropology departments.

The involvement of African-Americans was also unusual, with one faculty member -- the influential Johnnetta Cole -- and one third of the black physical anthropology students in the United States (Rankin-Hill and Blakey) during this crucial period. More importantly, they were steeped in African-American traditions of scholarship, which they inserted into the departmental discourse. The progressive intellectual developments of the 1960s and early 1970s were well recognized at Massachusetts, as was the abysmal record of physical anthropology regarding race. Research on the political history of physical anthropology was exceptionally active there, and the emphasis was on the development of new theory. The core of ABGP skeletal biologists come from this background. They also have been influenced by African Diasporic scholars, prominently including Montague Cobb of Howard.

During that period, many of the forensics-oriented academic and museum programs that also conducted bioarchaeological investigations, in contrast, still were hampered by approaches reflective of the racial-descriptive tradition. In places like the Physical Anthropology Division of the Smithsonian Institution or forensics-oriented physical anthropology at the University of Tennessee, a technical emphasis on human identification appeared to grow in isolation from social, cultural, and political theory, or African-American studies. Despite their then embrace of less progressive traditions, these and other institutions and their graduates have been much involved in the shaping of bioarchaeology in the diaspora and during the 1960's and early 1970's were perhaps the most influential institutions for forensic anthropology.

The racial-descriptive approach rather than a biocultural one, dominated the Metropolitan Forensic Anthropology Team's initial field analyses of skeletons at the NYABG site. Their apparent efforts to define the population racially, with little regard for its cultural and historical interpretation, appeared in awkward contrast to the critical, humanistic, and diasporic sensibilities of the descendant community and to the biohistorical research orientation of the new Project leadership that took charge of the laboratory and analytical phases of research described in this final report and its two companion reports.

The distinctions between these approaches are recognized by many practicing paleopathologists. Scholars from any of the specializations and institutions described above are, of course, diverse and individual in the ways that they have developed expertise and should not be stereotyped by the examples or general trends explicated earlier herein. The goal of this chapter is to clarify the difference that each historical,

intellectual trajectory makes for the study of African-American bioarchaeology. The clashes between these approaches in the1990s, highlighted by the African Burial Ground phenomenon in New York City, are understandable from this vantage (see Epperson 1999; La Roche and Blakey 1997). The ABGP chose its epistemological path among these available avenues.

Some very interesting diasporic bioarchaeology work was also conducted by researchers outside the United States by the end of the 1980s. The most sophisticated is the work of Mohamad Khudabux, sponsored by the Universities of Surinam, Kuwait, and Leiden (1989 and 1991). His studies refer extensively to much of the recent United States skeletal literature and to Higman's (1979) archival data on statures of different African ethnic groups enslaved in the Caribbean (1979). A study of the 38 African skeletal remains (57 burials) of the Waterloo Plantation (1793-1861) in coastal Surinam is striking for its combination of modern paleopathological methods (from the Workshop of European Anthropologists), its use of historical documents, and political economic analysis (akin to the most advanced stage of North American biocultural theory as represented in Goodman and Leatherman 1998). The overarching question of the study is whether the skeletal data would confirm the eighteenth and nineteenth century chronicles pointing to poorer health and quality of life among the enslaved Africans of the Caribbean than among those of the United States. The data generally does confirm, but the detailed analysis is all the more interesting.

Mortality on this cotton plantation was highest among 0-5 and 35-60 year olds, producing a life expectancy at birth of approximately 40 years. This life expectancy, higher than at sugar plantations, was attributed to the less extreme arduousness of cotton

work. The study makes skeletal statural comparisons to those from Caribbean and North American sites, and considers the influences of both genetics and diet. Unusually and especially significant, it includes descriptions of variation in African cultural origins during the course of the trade, including Ewe, Fon, Yoruba, and Akan (Gulf of Guinea), thus giving a cultural texture to bioarchaeology that racial assessment otherwise obscures.

This study's evidence demonstrates the skeletal effects of heavy work, poor housing, and poor nutrition as does the contemporary research on North America. A distinct pattern for Surinam, which the authors effectively generalize to much of the Caribbean during the active slave trade period, is the small proportion of women on Surinam plantations. There were approximately twice the number of skeletons of enslaved men as there were of women at Waterloo, and historical documents report a less extreme but consistently low sex ratio for Surinam as a whole. They also present convincing evidence for syphilis in 27 percent of the population (with vault stellate lesions); eight of whom were diagnosed with the acquired venereal form. "Saber shin" (sword-shaped tibiae associated with syphilis and yaws) was present in six individuals between 5 and 15 years of age who were thought to have contracted late congenital syphilis, a total of 14 or 56 percent of those showing treponemal infection. Skeletal manifestations at this level point to a heavily treponema-infected group, most of which appears to be syphilis. Treponemal diseases in the ABG Ground sample occurred at dramatically lower rates than were found in the Surinam sample and included no examples of stellate lesions.

What stands above most U.S. observations of this colonial disease in blacks is the incorporation of a dynamic historical context by the Surinamese researchers.

Documentation shows that veneral syphilis was introduced to Africans by the frequent rape and abuse of women on slaving ships, and the widespread concubinage of female house servants which spread contagion. Since the sex ratio was so low, as was the woman's control of her own body, the clear inference would be that European and African males would have been sexually active with the same women. A relatively large proportion of males were instrumental to the cotton industry, as with the even more labor intensive sugar industry. Under conditions of slavery, the Caribbean sex ratio contributed to the spread of treponemal disease. Fertility in the Caribbean was noted as being flat or below replacement, similar to what the History Final Report documents for Eighteenth century New York. During the period of intensively active transatlantic trade, Africans could simply be replaced when made to work beyond the physiological requirements of fecundity. Khudabux and his associates show that when the transatlantic trade was outlawed and Surinam needed to foster fertility among the Africans enslaved there, the ravages of syphilis had become so great that it would be a long time before its population could grow, which ironically hindered Surinam's economic development (11).

United States anthropologists were also examining Caribbean bioarchaeological data during the late 1980s and 1990s. The historical archaeological report of Handler and Lange (1978) spurred many subsequent skeletal studies of Newton Plantation in Barbados. Since the archaeological excavation of the skeletons had been less than systematic, skulls predominated the collection and hence dental studies were emphasized. These studies revealed high frequencies of enamel hypoplasia, indicating high nutritional and disease stresses in early childhood (Corruccini et al. 1985). Three individuals with Moon's molars and Hutchinson's incisors were reported, which was extrapolated to a 10

percent syphilis rate for the living plantation population (Jacobi et al. 1992). Studies of trace elements isolated very high lead contents, which, if not the result of contamination, suggested a high intake of rum distilled in leaded pipes (Corruccini et al. 1987a). They also reported dental modification ("tooth mutilation"), high frequencies of tooth root hypercementosis associated with chronic malnutrition and periodic, seasonal rehabilitation (Corruccini et al. 1987b) and high childhood mortality. One of the important generalizable findings of the study involved infant mortality, which these authors found to be about 50 percent of mortality reported in archival records. Less than half this percentage, 16 infant deaths in a total population of 104 skeletons, was observed from infant skeletons, which were disproportionately destroyed by taphonomic processes (Jacobi et al. 1992). These differences of archival and skeletal data for estimates of infant mortality will be important to recall when ABGP comparisons are made between skeletal data on African captives and Trinity Church burial records on the English slave-holding population.

The work of the physical anthropologists discussed earlier is modestly integrated with the more cultural and historical work reported elsewhere in other, specialized articles (e.g., Handler 1997). This common limitation of disciplinary and specialist journals leaves biological assessment in isolation and thus limits biocultural interpretations. Site reports can overcome this segmentation; for example, Armstrong and Fleischman (1993) evaluated four African skeletons from the Seville Plantation, Jamaica, combining paleopathology, history, and archaeological analysis. The elegant simplicity of these house burials, which show cultural continuity between the Asante, plantation laborers and Maroons, and their symbolic goods, accentuates their evocative

individual biological characterizations. The sample is, however, inadequate for statistical analysis.

A good example of decontextualized, descriptive approaches is also found in the Caribbean, the Harney Site Slave Cemetery, on private land in Montserrat. The site was being destroyed by swimming pool construction when archaeologist David Watters obtained the owner's cooperation in salvaging some of the skeletal remains. The site was so much disturbed that artifacts could not be established as grave goods, although a few pottery sherds were found, including imported and "Afro-Montserratian" unglazed wares. Like Newton Plantation and the NYABG site, graves were in west-east/head-foot orientation (Watters and Peterson 1991). The remains of 17 black slaves were discovered during construction (only 10 of which were *in situ* burials) and were sent to the University of Tennessee for study (Mann et al. 1987). There were six adult males (average stature 5'11"), six adult females (5'1"), one probable male and four subadults, but no infant or young child remains.

The study is forensic in that its purpose was to estimate "age, race, sex, and stature" and is highly descriptive. The authors also reported that 17 of 92 teeth exhibited caries, two showed pipe notches, and root hypercementosis and hypoplasia "similar to those described by Corruccini et al. (1982, 1985) in Barbados. Anemia (porotic hyperostosis) was frequent but periostitis (representing infectious disease) was low. Three women had fractures, one of the right fibula (lower leg), one of the left thumb, and one of the right ankle that had become severely infected. Degenerative joint disease was moderate and related mainly to aging. The authors point to a harsh lifestyle with periodic severe malnutrition and common illnesses, leading to early death.

While the size of the sample is small, the lack of local historical context is striking. West Indies shipping data from one historical source is mentioned along with two comparisons with the Newton Plantation skeletal study. The remaining literature is solely forensic or skeletal biological. There is no discussion of the conditions of life on the Bransby Plantation (or of Montserrat as a whole) where the interred had previously lived and worked. The repeated references to their study of the "Negroid traits" of the "Black slaves" (Mann et al. 1987; and Watters") and Peterson's recapitulation of Mann et al. in 1991) showed a remarkable similarity to the outmoded typological approach of an earlier era in which "racial" identification substituted for the construction of a human cultural and historical identity (12). Indeed, these same criticisms have been raised regarding initial forensic field studies of the NYAGP.

The bioarchaeology of the African Diaspora in the Americas has today developed several different trajectories. The biocultural and forensic approaches represent polar opposites of a continuum. Our project has made use of the biocultural approaches that emphasize the need for substantial historical background and analysis of the political and economic relations upon which a population's biological condition depends. The Boasian cultural environmentalist tradition can be found at the root of biocultural anthropology, yet a theory of the impact of social "circumstances" upon the "physical man" is also found a half century prior to Boas' work in the diasporan writings of Frederic Douglass, followed by Firmin and Cobb. Douglass' dialectic of social action and biology (e.g., "a man is worked upon by what he works on") was pit against racial reductionism of the founding fathers of American physical anthropology (Douglass 1854, pp. 304-5). As with the biocultural and historically-grounded bioarchaeological studies

that began to appear in the 1980s, our research project is interested in the dialectical relations of biology, culture, and history. The relationship among these fields tells a human story of the bones of a past community. The ABGP, furthermore, utilizes the kinds of broad interdisciplinary syntheses, diasporic concept, and geographical scope, critique, and public engagement that are consistent with the intellectual traditions of diasporic people. The following chapter describes how these aspects of theory further advance the effort to reveal dynamic, human history while striving to resolve some of the ethical and epistemological dilemmas of non-reductionist research.

Studies that substitute racial identification for culture and pathological assessments for history remain antithetical to these approaches. Their narrowness of scope appears to be consistent with the European Enlightenment's reductionist notions of objectivity in which "parts" (especially biological parts) become important to understand as abstractly separable from the larger 'whole' of their interaction. It is clear nonetheless that these descriptive studies are not without political messages and biased characterizations of the populations under study. Looking back at the development of African Diasporic bioarchaeolgy, it becomes apparent that a lack of interest in and understanding of the social, cultural, and historical dimensions of "the black" often allowed researchers to be satisfied with very narrow interpretations of bioarchaeological sites. The experiences of the people buried at these sites were dehumanized by the ostensible objectification of racial classification and ahistorical pathology assessments. Opportunities to explore the complex human dimensions of each skeletal biography, to know a population's cultural identity and societal origins, or to examine the local and international political and economic "circumstances" of a now-skeletal population were

lost. Studies that fail to examine such human dimensions of African diasporic skeletal data ultimately create the impression of people without a history.

Notes

[1] I am very thankful for the research assistance of David Harris who, with the help of Tomlinson, obtained copies of all of the literature in African diasporic bioarchaeology for my review. Thanks also to the many helpful colleagues who sent site reports and articles in the less accessible journals.

[2] Blacks took what they could use at Northwestern's African Studies Program, and moved on to develop their own segregated turf. Joseph Harris, as an example, would ultimately extend his scope from Ethiopia to West and Eastern African "Return Movements" (1993). He organized a conference on the diaspora in 1979 (mainly involving historians from the diaspora), which would lead to the seminal volume *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora* (1993, [1982]). His scholarship helped mold a diasporic focus for the History Department at Howard where he devoted his career.

[3] The most influential work on ancient Egypt among diasporans themselves, is Cheik Anta Diop's *The African Origin of Civilization: Myth or Reality* (1974), first published as an article in *Presence Africaine* in 1955. Anta Diop's evidence interprets Egypt as the racially-black classical center of African culture (also see Holl 1995 on Diop). His work continues to fuel Afrocentric (or Afrocentricity) scholarship popular within the African- American community (Blakey 1995).

[4] Recently, researchers at the University of Capetown have used isotopic analysis to demonstrate dietary change in the African victims of the wreck of the Portuguese slaving brig, Pacquet Real (Cox and Sealy 1997). Morris (1998) examines dental modification in southern Africa from the early Iron Age onward. Perhaps these and other recent Cape Town studies will initiate an emergence of African bioarchaeology apart from the Nile Valley or the paleoanthropology of East African hominids. Human origins studies in Africa, like Nile Valley research, have traditionally sought to understand the origins of non-Africans. Textbooks and museum exhibitions usually shift from Africa (Australopithecines) to Asia (H. erectus) to Europe (H. sapiens) attesting to the use of Africa (where evolution continues today) as only a precursor of modern Europeans. Historical archaeology on non-colonial whites in Africa is rare. I was unable to identify a single bioarchaeological study in West or Central Africa, the regions most directly related to the origins of the American Diaspora.

[5] An interesting twist is found in the work of Caroline Bond Day, an African American whose first degree was earned at Atlanta University. Afterwards, she attended Radcliffe College where she wrote a masters thesis on mixed race families in her native Georgia (Ross et al. 1999). Earnest Hooton of Harvard, her Radcliffe advisor, introduced Day in the resulting book as a "proximate mulatto." *In A Study of Some Negro-White Families in the United States* (Day 1932), she takes up a more sociological analysis of racial intermarriage than Hooton had expected. It was an uneven book, without an analysis of the relationship between the extensive biological and sociological observations; physical anthropologists made no use of it and blacks were uncomfortable with it. Ross and associates (1999, p. 45) attribute this in part to the fact that "Hooton's

goals were different from Day's…. Day wished to stress the sociocultural similarities between a black middle-class population and a white middle-class population, while Hooton wished to stress the biological differences between these two populations…Day attributes differences in lifestyle to racial segregation rather than to any innate biological differences." Day was also a humanist who devoted much of her energy to dramatic and fictional writing, and did not continue to conduct physical anthropological research.

When the sociologists and anthropologists at Chicago were investigating the social causes of urban violence and crime, Earnest Hooton (1939) conducted a nation-wide investigation of the racial and anatomical bases of different types of crime that included a black genetic propensity for rape.

[6] Paleopathology had first focused on individual specimens, not populational structure and dimensions of health. Traumatic lesions and syphilis, trephination (evidence of pre-scientific brain surgery), dental "mutilation" (esthetic modification of the shape of anterior teeth), and deliberate cranial "deformation" (esthetic modification of skull shape) provided exotic and sensational single specimens on which to report (Armelagos et al. 1971). Yet, many of the individual cases reported were probably essential to the development of type specimens for diagnosis that would be needed for later paleoepidemiological work. Reports of individual cases, racial taxonomic studies, and descriptive research with vague ties to evolutionary theory (and which were uninformed by social history) continued throughout the 1970s (Armelagos et al. 1982). By that time a modern statistical paleopathology and bioarchaeology had also become well established. Not until the 1980s, forty years after its application to Native American and other cultural groups, would the paleodemographic or statistical approach come to be

used for the study of people of African descent in the Americas. African-American physical anthropologists would also participate in that work for the first time during the 1980s, bringing their intellectual traditions with them.

[7] Angel did what was probably the only means of addressing the problem of the very low economic status of individuals comprising modern skeletal collections by using donated skeletons and crime victims that included the non-impoverished. Angel's sampling probably came closer to a proper comparison than usual. El-Najjar et al. (1978), for example, studied secular change in dental enamel hypoplasia frequencies (evidence of childhood malnutrition and disease) in U.S. blacks and whites without addressing these biases. The fact that both the perpetrators and victims of violent crime tend to be among the desperate poor, however, means that some class bias likely remained in Angel's study. The extent of class continuity among these temporally differentiated groups should be considered when the modesty of change observed by Angel is considered.

[8] It should be noted that Merrick Posnansky (UCLA), who would introduce Theresa Singleton at the first session ever on historical archaeology at the tenth Congress of the Pan African Association for Prehistory and Related Studies in Harare in 1995, as the "mother of African American archaeology," had been an important mentor to many of the new Africanists and diasporic archaeologists who emerged from UCLA in the 1980s. Professors DeCorse and Agorsa represent Professor Posnasky's influence within the ABGP. Perry, Howson, and Bianchi of our project, furthermore, had studied or worked with Schuyler and others at the forefront of African-American historical archaeology in the Northeast United States.

[9] Although Rathbun at South Carolina also studied with Bass, his work stands out as exceptionally informed by an appreciation for the biohistorical debates. Rathbun and Scurry (1991) also compare the evidence of infection, malnutrition, mortality, and lead content in skeletons of enslaved Africans and slave holders from the Belleview Plantation (1738-1756) near Charleston, South Carolina. These authors indicate that the Africans clearly had harder work and lower status than the English plantation owners. The health of the two samples was similarly very poor, although the owners had twice the exposure to lead as did workers due to food preparation and storage differences.

[10] Rathbun's results on a South Carolina plantation were very similar, as was the mutual finding of significantly higher hypoplasia frequencies in male than female children (Guatelli-Steinberg and Lukacs 1999). The Howard study also first showed that the dietary stresses of weaning were not the primary cause of hypoplasia (see review of Katzenberg et al., 1998) in African Americans, raising questions about this assumption of Rathbun (1987) and Corruccini and coworkers (1984).

[11] The incisiveness of a political economic approach to bioarchaeology was developing well outside of the U.S. It may also be worthy to note that although African Diasporic studies were not undertaken, the Mexican tradition of physical anthropology spurred by Juan Comas has been well ahead of the U.S. in the use of a political economic analysis (Marquez-Morfin, 1998). A recently discovered sugar plantation cemetery for enslaved Africans in Oaxaca (Hacienda de San Nicolas Ayotla) was reported by historian Arturo Mota and anthropologists Abigail Meza and Socorro Baez at the X Coloquio International de Antropología Física, Juan Comas. The site, on which excavation began in 2000, is the first African diasporic bioarchaeological project in Mexico.

[12] The study of the Mt. Pleasant Plains (1850-1900) in Washington, DC, is highly descriptive and shows a similar disregard of known history. Although a census of local migration is discussed and there is an extensive review of old Washington cemeteries, little is said of the people who used them. The 13 African-American skeletons showed apparent good health, which may indicate a more affluent black urban population or a rural existence during the pre- and early industrial period, a time before a rapid decline in dental health and relative physical health. Such interpretations would be very much enhanced by some details about the social and economic situation of the people who used this cemetery. Notably, recent community activity has focused on this site. Once owned by the Colored Benevolent Association, much of the cemetery was purchased by the Smithsonian's National Zoological Park in 1890 and another portion (from which the 13 skeletons originated) was sold to a developer in 1959 who was supposed to have relocated the remains. Recent public objections grew out of the Zoo's attempt to convert part of this land into a dump while claiming that the Smithsonian was not bound by the National Historic Preservation Act (Coates in *Washington City Paper* 3 April 1998).

[13] Since these specialties differ much in theory but little in method, the specialty of "forensics" (which is the more recognizable of the two to the public ear) has often been used as a catch-all for crime-scene and archaeological research involving skeletons, although the term forensic actually refers to the identification of recently disposed (usually no older than 100 years) human remains for the police and courts. The required training for forensics has to do with the identification of individuals, not the analysis of populations that must be understood in a social and historical context. When skeletal remains are first discovered, forensic anthropologists are the proper specialists for

establishing whether the remains are crime-related (therefore falling under their purview) or whether they are older, archaeological remains (requiring demographic and epidemiological analysis as well as knowledge of the specific historical context of the remains under study). The increasingly sloppy usage of a "forensics" expertise in government contracting for bioarchaeological research, beyond first discovery, would tend to reinforce ahistorical interpretations of skeletal populations. These differences are especially important when, in the interest of objectification, race substitutes for the history of African diasporic sites when there is no "Negroid" culture or history. Thus, what this research team considers an overextension in use of forensics consultation instead may simply be a utilitarian and convenient approach for contractors and clients, the frequent use of which occurs not in order to deliberately undermine the construction of African-American history and identity, but rather as the unconscious residual of a "bottom line" orientation, naïve scientism, insensitivity of the potential for historical context, or social distance from black people who might be more inclined to question its application.